

To: Rhode Island Renewable Energy Fund Advisory Board *(Draft)*
From: Nancy Selman
Date: January 21, 2005
Re: Meeting Minutes for January 11, 2005

Next meeting dates: Second Tuesday of every month. For 2005: 2/8, 3/8, 4/12, 5/10, 6/14, 7/12, 8/9, 9/13, 10/11, 11/8, 12/13.

In attendance: See attached Attendance List.

- 1) Minutes and Update –
 - a) Minutes - The December 2004 minutes were approved without changes.
 - b) Update – URI wind project. Janice McClanaghan explained the selection process that URI is undertaking to procure performance contracting services for energy efficiency improvements. The State Energy Office put out an RFP in 2004 to select four energy service companies (ESCOs) for state agencies to use for energy efficiency projects in large buildings (over 100 kW). State building operators were asked to participate by providing data on energy use, etc. Four ESCOs were pre-qualified by the SEO. URI has plans for energy efficiency using performance contracting for all of its buildings. The method it is using to choose one contractor from among the four is to have each of the 4 perform a full-fledged energy audit on 1 building. These will be evaluated by the facilities staff. The ESCOs must look at electrical loads such as lighting and at least one fossil fuel project per building. The proposed wind turbine is not part of the initial evaluation process, but will be analyzed once a contractor is chosen.
- 2) New Business –
 - a) MMWEC – A letter was drafted by Bob Grace and sent to MMWEC expressing concern about the claims regarding renewable energy. MMWEC is purchasing the commodity energy only from the Berkshire Wind project, but is calling it renewable energy in their press releases. The letter was circulated to the Board.
 - b) Portsmouth Abbey – Brother Joseph of Portsmouth Abbey sent a thank-you letter to Janice McClanaghan in acknowledgement of the \$450,000 grant for the installation of a 600 kW wind turbine on the school's campus.
 - c) A contractor was hired to work on the agreement to purchase RECs from the Berkshire Wind project. The contractor is George Dean of the law firm of Foley Hoag LLP.
 - d) Low Income Programs – The Fund is being looked at as a source of cash for providing low income energy assistance in the State. Janice McClanaghan has participated in two meetings where taking money from the Fund for low income uses has been proposed.
 - e) RI Renewable Energy Standard (RES or RPS) - PUC Rulemaking - Doug Hartley gave an update on the status of the proposed rulemaking for the RES. Doug has spoken to the Commission and told the Commissioners that the Fund would like to take an active role in drafting the proposed rules. The Commission has decided to have a negotiated rulemaking. The Commissioners are expecting a letter from the SEO stating the desire on the part of the Fund to be involved. An open meeting was held on January 13, 2005 to open the rulemaking docket.
 - f) Solar Street Light at Ancient Little Neck Cemetery – The previous Renewable Collaborative paid for a PV outdoor light at a historic cemetery (the Ancient Little Neck Cemetery in Riverside, RI) run by a non-profit group. That light has failed and the group that maintains the cemetery has asked for help in repairing it. Narragansett Electric has already sent a line truck out to replace the light bulb twice, and is requesting that the Fund pay for determining what is wrong with the light and fixing it. This is a good

application of PV lighting in that there is no access to grid power and the light is used to protect against vandalism. Chris Warfel will check into the problem.

- 3) GreenUp Ballot – Erich Stephens of People’s Power and Light presented a request to the Fund to pay for a second mailing of the ballot (Narragansett Electric bill stuffer) in RI during calendar 2005. The request was presented on behalf of the four power marketers who are taking part in Narragansett Electric’s GreenUp program. During the discussion, it was suggested that the Small Customer Incentive be paid on a current basis instead of being deferred, which would have the effect of providing better cash flow to the marketers, allowing them to better be able to handle expenses like a second ballot. Erich Stephens argued that the Smartpower budget should be reduced to pay for the ballot, since it was his assertion that the most cost effective way of obtaining new GreenUp customers is through the ballot bill stuffer. A discussion ensued about demand for green power products among residential consumers. Several suggestions were made, including researching the demand for green power by looking at the ballot and other responses, surveying customers and conducting focus groups. The Board voted to reduce the Smartpower budget by \$11,000 (one third the cost of the ballot mailing) and pay for a third or \$11,000 out of the Fund’s budget. This would leave \$11,000 or one-third of the cost to be divided among the four power marketers. The Fund will contribute to the October ballot, allowing for time to evaluate the green power market. Smartpower will be asked to provide a proposal for research and validation of the market for green power.
- 4) Roger Williams University Wind Center Proposal – Lefteris Pavlides presented a proposal for a grant of \$157,294 to implement The Wind Energy Project to promote and enable the development and generation of wind energy in the State. The proposal builds on the work which was conducted in 2004 by RWU Professor Pavlides and his colleagues with support from the RIREF and Roger Williams University. The requested funding will allow Professor Pavlides and others to continue engaging additional RI communities to initiate exploration of the viability of installing wind turbines and will continue providing services in anemometry (wind measuring), photosimulations, and site selection, to various new and on-going Rhode Island wind projects. Providing anemometry and photosimulations were most recently critical to Portsmouth Abbey’s formal request for funding to install the first (utility scale) wind turbine in Rhode Island and providing site selection drawings was critical in University of Rhode Island (URI)’s site selection. Professor Pavlides and his colleague from Brown University, Christina Zarcodoolas, will create a “Wind Tool” (in CD Rom and on a website) that is intended to advance wind energy development by facilitating a community wide interactive decision making process. The empirically tested decision-making process (Wind Tool) will be used to influence the dialogue about wind energy in Rhode Island and beyond. Discussion of Professor Pavlides’ proposal included the acknowledgement that the work to support specific projects such as URI and Portsmouth Abbey was useful, as well as skepticism regarding the usefulness of the deliberative polling tool. The Board voted to approve the grant request.
- 5) Solaris Nanosciences/Slater Center – Solaris Nanosciences is a spin-off of Spectra Systems Corporation, a private, for-profit company spun out of Brown University in 1996. Solaris’ technology breakthrough involves placing engineered metallic nanostructures near molecules in used in certain optical processes. The nanostructures act as antennae, causing the molecules to absorb light more efficiently. This results in enhanced conversion efficiencies, and in the case of photovoltaics, greater solar energy conversion efficiencies. Solaris’ technology has application in dye-sensitized or Graetzel photovoltaic cells. Graetzel cells are made more cheaply (through a process that is more akin to printing than clean room fabrication) but have inherently lower efficiencies than crystalline silicon cells which are currently the industry standard. Solaris’ nanotechnology would increase the efficiency of the Graetzel cells. Konarka (in Massachusetts) is one example of a company that is

commercializing Graetzel cell technology and is a strategic partner of Solaris'. Solaris is currently raising venture capital and would like the Fund to invest \$100,000 along with Slater Center's anticipated bridge funding of \$150,000. There was some discussion among Board members of the potential for investment through the Slater Center but no vote was taken. Two specific concerns were that the Fund legislatively might not be able to make a venture investment and that the Board did not have the expertise to perform due diligence for a venture investment.

- 6) Smartpower – Smartpower's revised work plan was discussed. The Board requested more detail in the plan, recognizing that evaluating metrics for outreach and public education might be difficult and that the best way to manage Smartpower's effort might be to closely monitor the action plan. It was decided to approve Smartpower's plan through May, with more detail regarding exactly what they will be doing, and to revisit the proposal in May. Smartpower will be instructed to get involved with the Earth Day planning committee in RI.
- 7) Strategic Plan - Janet Keller and Bob Grace provided an update on the strategic planning process. A subcommittee met on January 6, the next meeting is January 18. Minutes for the January 6 meeting are available upon request, the strategic planning meetings are open to all Board members. The strategic plan discussion to date has dealt with stating vision, goals and objectives, and how to support the RPS. The role of the Fund is seen as to support the RPS as well as complement it.

Decisions:

- 1) The Board voted to reduce the Smartpower budget by \$11,000 (one third the cost of the ballot mailing) and pay for a third or \$11,000 out of the Fund's budget. The Fund's money would be contributed toward the October ballot.
- 2) The Board voted to approve a grant of \$157,294 to Professor Pavlides at Roger Williams University to implement The Wind Energy Project.
- 3) The Board decided to allow Smartpower to work through May on public outreach and marketing in support of GreenUp, and to ask for a more detailed work plan for this effort.

Actions

- 1) Chris Warfel will contact the Little Neck Cemetery regarding the solar light in need of repairs.
- 2) The GreenUp marketers will be notified of the Fund's decision to provide \$22,000 of the cost of a second ballot mailing in October, 2005.
- 3) Smartpower will be notified to reduce their work plan and budget by \$11,000 and that the Fund is reducing its commitment to Smartpower by \$11,000. The reduction in Smartpower's workplan will affect ballot marketing activities.
- 4) Smartpower will be asked to provide a proposal for research and validation of GreenUp.
- 5) A letter will be sent to Professor Pavlides informing him of the approval of his grant request.
- 6) Smartpower will be asked to submit a more detailed work plan, and told that they are approved for funding through May, and a review of their performance and contract will be conducted in May.

Attendance:

Cannon, Charlie
Capobianco, Julie
Carty, Joe
Condon, Pat
Douglas, Stuart

Dzykewicz, Andrew
Farley, John
Grace, Bob
Gupta, Ram
Hartley, Doug
Jacobson, David
Keller, Janet
King, Lawrence
Lowandy, Nabil
Lueker, Bill
McClanaghan, Janice
Michelman, Tom
Miller, Rayvon
Murtagh, Kathleen
Pavrides, Lefteris
Rochon, Emily
Rose, Vin
Ryan, Eleanor
Selman, Nancy
Stearns, David
Stephens, Erich
Teichert, Kurt
Tillotson, Scott
Unterman, Ron
Ward, Harold
Warfel, Christopher
Zarcadoolas, Christina
Zox, Alan